GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:131
ANSWERED ON:02.02.2017
Depletion in Ground Water Level
Khadse Smt. Raksha Nikhil

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has analysed the reasons for depletion of ground water in the country, if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether any research study has been conducted by various institutes in the country particularly Gandhinagar recently in regard to deepening of ground water level to alarming situation, if so, the details thereof; and
(c) the remedial steps taken/to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION

(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)
(a) Growing urbanization, industrialization and population, amongst others, have resulted into declining ground water levels in various parts of the Country. Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) carries out ground water monitoring, four times a year, on regional scale through a network of observation wells in the Country. Water level data for pre-monsoon 2016 compared with decadal mean of pre-monsoon (2006-2015) indicates decline in ground water level in 66% of the wells monitored.

(b) Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR provides financial assistance to promote research work in the field of water resources under Research & Development Programme in water sector during XII Plan. At present, one R&D study on 'Estimation of Aquifer Potential in Jharia Coal Mining Region with suitable techniques to improve the recharge' is being done by Indian School Of Mines, Dhanbad.

(c) Remedial steps taken up by the Central Government to control depletion of ground water level in the Country, inter-alia, include :
â€¢ The National Water Policy (2012) formulated by Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR, inter-alia, advocates conservation, promotion and protection of water and highlights the need for augmenting the availability of water through rain water harvesting, direct use of rainfall and other management measures. The National Water Policy (2012) has been forwarded to all State Governments/ UTs and concerned Ministries/ Departments of Central Government for adoption.
â€¢ CGWB has also prepared a conceptual document entitled "Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water in India" during 2013, involving ground water scientists/experts. The Master Plan envisages construction of 1.11 crore rain water harvesting and artificial recharge structures in the Country at an estimated cost of Rs.79,178 crores to harness 85 BCM (Billion Cubic Metre) of water. The augmented ground water resources will enhance the availability of water for drinking, domestic, industrial and irrigation purpose. The Master Plan has been circulated to all State Governments for adoption.
â€¢ Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under "The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986" for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the Country. So far, CGWA has notified 162 areas in the Country for the purpose of regulation of ground water. Under the CGWA guidelines, in notified areas, no permission is accorded to extract ground water through any energized means for any purpose other than drinking water. However, for non-notified areas, ground water withdrawal by industries is regulated by means of guidelines/criteria as specified as CGWA.
â€¢ CGWA has issued advisories to States and UTs to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water / rain water harvesting. 30 States/UTs have made rain water harvesting mandatory by enacting laws or by formulating rules & regulations or by including provisions in Building bye-laws or through suitable Government Orders.
â€¢ This Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for its regulation and development which includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 15 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation on the lines of Model bill.
â€¢ Special focus is given through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for water conservation and water harvesting structures to augment ground water. In addition, priority has been given for construction of farm ponds in the year 2016-17 to harvest rain water.
â€¢ The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has suggested all States to adopt water conservation measures like roof top rainwater harvesting, erecting sustainability structures for water conservation etc. For creating such sustainability structures, 10 % of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) funds are provided to the States.
â€¢ Department of Land Resources is currently implementing 8214 watershed development projects in 28 States covering an area of about 39.07 million ha. under the Watershed Development Component (WDC) of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) principally for development of rainfed portions of net cultivated area and culturable wastelands. The major activities taken up under the WDC-PMKSY, inter-alia, include ridge area treatment, drainage line afforestation, soil and moisture conservation, rain water harvesting, horticulture, and pasture development etc.
â€¢ CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management programme during XII Plan, under the scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation. The Aquifer Mapping is aimed to delineate aquifer disposition and their characterization for preparation of aquifer/area specific ground water management plans, with community participation.
â€¢ MoWR, RD & GR has also launched 'Jal Kranti Abhiyan' (2015-16 to 2017-18) in order to consolidate water conservation and management in the Country through a holistic and integrated approach involving all stakeholders, making it a mass movement.

â€¢ CGWB has been organizing mass awareness programmes in the Country to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water; more than 17 lakh children participated in a nation-wide painting competition in the last year to promote conservation of water.
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